

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, May 22, 2006

The Center of Clayton – OASIS Meeting Room A

The following members were present:

Andy Goldberg, Chairman	Judy Goodman
Alex Berger	Dick Hyde
Mimi Deem	Jill Indovino
Deb Dubin	

Excused/Absent

Brad Bernstein
Rich Yawitz

Also Present:

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation
Ken Goldman, Clayton Parks Foundation

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the April 24 meeting were approved.

Director's Report

Ms. DeForrest stated that the Shaw Park Aquatic Center is scheduled to open on May 27. The Aquatic Department has been working very hard to get everything ready for opening day. The Tennis Center is up and running. An additional staff member has been added to the Tennis Center staff in order to assist the coaches during open hours of operation. The Fitness Department is working on a proposal for a Youth Activity Center at The Center of Clayton. This is a new proposal and the Youth Activity Center would be for three to thirteen year olds. It would be an activity based room, which would give this age group the opportunity to do many more activities at the Center. Ms. Dubin suggested that she would like to have a one hour focus group to discuss potential activities that may be offered at the Center. There is strong registration for camps and many people have registered for swim lessons.

This is prime time for events in the City of Clayton. The first Parties in the Park went very well. The first Musical Nights in Oak Knoll will take place on Sunday, May 28 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Taste of Clayton will take place on Sunday, June 4 in Shaw Park. Wally Lundt Day is June 25 from 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. at the Shaw Park Aquatic Center. In reference to projects the Glenridge Playground is complete. The children are having a great time playing there. It was dedicated on May 13. The Ball Field Project will take place in late summer, which means ball fields five and six will be down through the Fall. The mulch pile is being redesigned by the Public Works department in order to create a new drainage system.

The Parks Foundation information has been added to the City's website. Ms. DeForrest asked the Commission to sign up to receive e-mail newsletters on the City's website – www.ci.clayton.mo.us

Ms. DeForrest stated that other happenings in the City are things such as the Joint Study Subcommittee. The last meeting was very helpful and their next step is to write a final report and send it to the full Joint Study Committee. The Hanley House Council is completing their goal writing session, which is the phase one of the project. Once their next session with the consultant is complete they will come back to the Commission with their proposal. The first meeting for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan took place. They accomplished many things during this meeting such as set goals and establish an eight month schedule. Further, the consultant will attend Commission meetings every other month. The FY07 budget is due to the City Manager on May 24. The big portion of the Center of Clayton budget is complete and the current work is being done on the City budget, which is all of the outdoor facilities, park and project budgets.

Clayton Parks Foundation – Enhance Clayton Parks

Mr. Goldman, representative from the Clayton Parks Foundation attended this meeting in order to update the Commission about new projects the foundation is pursuing. The Clayton Parks Foundation was established in 1992 by Ms. Trautmen, a former Director of Clayton Parks and Recreation. Taste of

Clayton was set up fundraising vehicle for various charities. Over the last ten years The Taste of Clayton has given back to the Clayton Parks Foundation. Last year they received three thousand dollars from the event. The Clayton Parks Foundation will roll out the Enhance Clayton Parks program on June 4 at the 2006 Taste of Clayton event. They have volunteers every year at a beer booth during the event. The new Friend of the Clayton Parks Program gives individuals the opportunity to become a friend of the Clayton Parks Foundation by making a donation. Pamphlets will be handed out at the event. Mr. Goldman provided the Commission with handouts about the new program. They are a 501(c)(3) organization. Those who donate will be added to an e-mail distribution list so they can receive information about upcoming Parks and Recreation events. Currently when a memorial or a tribute tree has been donated, the Clayton Parks Foundation covers the cost of the brick and the plaque that is placed at the base of the tree. People can choose what type of tree that would like to have planted; however the Clayton Parks Foundation and the Parks department decided it would be best to limit the placement of the trees to Shaw Park and Oak Knoll Park. The Clayton Parks Foundation meets twice a year. Their next project is to work on the gazebo at Oak Knoll Park. The Foundation supported the installation of the aquarium at the Center of Clayton, they funded the lockers near the Fitness Center, and they assisted with the funding of the acorn at Wydown Park. Sometimes Parks and Recreation staff contacts the Clayton Parks Foundation to request funding for various projects. The foundation is looking to expand their board. If there are any interested parties they should contact Mr. Goldman directly. Ms. DeForrest stated that with the Friend of the Clayton Parks Foundation, they are hoping to generate excess funds. The hope is to have them fund larger projects. Many people really like to donate trees. Ms. Goodman noted that this type of project was very successful at Forest Park. The new projects are very exciting because the Clayton Parks Foundation is going to become much more visible. The Clayton Parks Foundation currently has approximately thirty five thousand dollars in their fund.

FY07 – Fees & Charges Recommendations

The study of these fees and charges was created for discussion purposes. The process we go through includes reviewing fees and charges for memberships, rentals, services provided and programs. We evaluate if they are set at the right amount, are we covering the cost of providing these services, how do we do in comparison to the market, and can we afford to make changes to these fees. Staff compiles a list of all fees and charges they are responsible for and make recommendations based upon that study. This year we had some interesting things take place. One of the things we have been trying to do for the last couple of years is streamline our policies between the Center of Clayton and the City of Clayton outdoor facilities. It has been a challenge for us since the Center of Clayton opened because we have different definitions and different methods of pricing, and it can be very confusing for members and staff to explain the various policies. Staff is making recommendations on changes that will further streamline our operations. Ms. DeForrest reviewed all of the recommendations.

The first recommendation is to streamline our classifications in order to use the same definitions at the City and the Center. This would impact two users. Two final groups that are treated differently currently are Washington University students and facility. They are classified as residents at the outdoor facilities and at the Center they are classified as corporate members, unless they live in Clayton. The other difference is that property owners in the City of Clayton are classified as residents at the outdoor facility and corporate at the Center. Anyone who works in Clayton is classified as a corporate member. There is a lot of history with Washington University, so it was decided that because a part of Washington University is in Clayton that all students and facility would be classified as corporate. It would be very difficult for everyone who attended Washington University to prove where they lived. It is easier for them to show us their student ID or employee pay check sub. There was discussion about whether or not it was a good idea to classify all staff and students that are associated with Washington University as corporate and/or resident since there are parts of the Washington University's campus that are not located in Clayton. There is a large part of our members who from Washington University who utilize the Center and the outdoor facilities. Ms. DeForrest will look into collecting more data about why Washington University originally obtained the privileges they have at the present time. The Washington University facility is difficult to get into during the school year because of their sports programs. Mr.

Goldberg noted that the proposed reclassification of corporate and resident statuses would cause residents to have face greater increases than corporate individuals. Potential significant increases to Shaw Park Youth Pool passes would likely not be a realistic increase. The proposal to only increase the corporate outdoor pool passes was correlated to the fact that we currently do not sell a great deal of these passes and we thought maybe it was due to the cost. When we run reports we find that we do not sell corporate passes at the Tennis Center and Ice Rink. This data was presented to the Commission to see what people thought about these recommendations. This information points out that there are big differences. Outdoor facilities have traditionally been funded by tax revenues and the prices for residents have been kept relatively low. Corporate fees had a second tier of pricing that was higher than a resident and we have not had offered non-resident passes before. In order to make our practices at both facilities the same what we have to do is raise the residents up and lower the corporate down. At the Center resident and corporate pay the same rates for memberships. Mr. Praiss strongly suggested keeping the residents rates low and raise the corporate rates in order to keep the outdoor facilities more family based.

It is suggested to raise residents rates be the same as corporate for consistency of classifications. There was a reason that when the Center of Clayton opened that residents and corporate were designated to pay the same rates. It would be perfectly understandable to have the rates remain different at the outdoor facilities and to have different pricing structures. If we want to be consistent across the board we would have to either change the pricing structure at the Center or at the outdoor facilities. We have to classify them the same at both entities. The consensus from the Commission is to keep the resident rates lower than corporate and non-residents rates, at least at the outdoor facilities.

The pool/tennis pass fee structure had an error in it from four years ago. Tennis was for basically included for free in the past. (The last time these prices came forward this was the error.) Mr. Goldberg would like for us to reconsider how we classify youth and adult status because we have two different ages within the outdoor and indoor facilities. At the Center of Clayton the youth age is 22 and under and for the pool pass it is 18. At Maplewood their fees are comparable to what we offer at the City of Clayton. Further, at the Maplewood pool they sell non-resident passes but they do not have non-resident daily fees, which is what we are proposing in this fees and charges recommendation proposal. We do have daily non-resident fees at the outdoor facilities.

Ms. DeForrest will go back to her staff and let them know that the Commission likes the tiered system and would like the resident rate to be as low as possible, and have the corporate rate higher. Ms. DeForrest will look into why Washington University employees and students receive the discounts they were entitled to when the Center opened. These fees will not change this year, the changes will be made next year. Other facilities are charging much higher rates for their non-resident passes. Most people will not travel more than a fifteen minute radius to utilize an outdoor pool facility. Some people will come from Ladue, University City, and Richmond Heights to utilize our pool. We could limit how many non-resident season passes we would sell. We will continue to have discussion about the fees at the outdoor facilities. Currently about half of the cities in the area have passes available to non-residents. We do have the capability to receive data about usage at the outdoor pool at the end of season and at the present time we can look at the number of people who pay non-resident fees at the outdoor pool. This will help members of the Commission get a better feel for numbers of people who utilize the outdoor pool. We do not want to see that revenue go down from non-resident daily fees; however if we replace it with the sale of non-resident season passes this would supplement it.

The fourth recommendation is related to rental fees. This refers to the rental of Shaw Park Aquatic Center. These fees need to increase as a result of increasing staffing and utility costs. The other facilities do not seem to need that. There is a large number of staff needed to run the outdoor pool, which is why it will have a significant change. We are recommending an increase from one hundred dollars an hour to one hundred and twenty-five dollars an hour for resident and corporate, and for non-residents from one hundred and twenty-five dollars and hour to one hundred and sixty. The other item is the establishment of a rental rate to rent the fields during the day which we currently do not have. We

have a thing called a tournament fee and we would eliminate that and go with a straight rental fee. The after hour hours at the pool are 8:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We do not have rental hours during the week because we have other usage such as lap summing and water polo. Various groups rent the pool on the weekends.

There is a pricing strategy for program fees, so we do not typically bring these fees to the Commission. However, if there is ever a question about program fees please bring the information to the meeting. Ms. Indovino began a discussion about soccer and baseball program fees. She stated that in soccer and baseball Clayton residents sign up Clayton teams with seventeen children and pay seventy dollars per resident. A Forsyth team, which is an outside team, pays three hundred and fifty dollars per team. This means that large teams made up of Clayton residents are paying much more than the outside teams because their rate per child is much lower. Ms. DeForrest noted that the difference is that these teams do not receive practice time or uniforms. Ms. Indovino also noted that when coaching Clayton teams in youth sports leagues that often times the children did not get much playing time because the teams are too large. Ms. DeForrest also noted that this issue has come up a few times in the past several years. Mr. Gruenenfelder could come to a meeting to address the issue further and explain why the leagues operate the way the do. Ms. Indovino stated that In Kindergarten through grade three the youth leagues seem to go quite well, but after that it seems as if things do not go too well. The Clayton schools used to operate sports program for sixth, seventh and eighth graders and recently asked the City to run these programs again. We just recently started Volleyball programs for these grades again. There will be further discussion about our recreational sport program at the next Commission meeting.

Old Business/New Business

The idea of potentially asking an individual who works in the Clayton community to serve on the board was discussed. Corporate members make up over twenty five percent of our memberships at the outdoor facilities. This person would be able to provide valuable feedback in reference to the fees and charges study.

Mr. Goldberg stated that one of the Tennis coaches had contacted him to see if it would be possible for Clayton High School to use the entire Tennis Center from February 15 through May 15 and August 15 through the end of October for the school teams. This would be from 3:00 – 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Ms. DeForrest responded stated that the City of Clayton has to balance the needs for the community as well as assist the Clayton High School coaches with their needs. Other options have been explored including extending practice time and using the facility for longer by splitting up the team members. They do get full use of the facility for big matches, tournaments and sectional meets. Ms. DeForrest will continue to work with the school district on usage of city facilities.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Denise Ucinski